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Goals for Education

CHALLENGE 2000

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SREB

Southern Regional Education Board

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There need be no mystery about the quality of education in the year 2000. Education in the year 2000 depends upon our actions in each of the todays and tomorrows until the end of this century. What we do and do not do, not some uncontrollable chain of events, will determine the fate of education.

While "any road will do if you don't care where you are going," we do care where we are going in education. We should see that the educational reforms of the 1980s lead to significant improvements throughout the 1990s and into the twenty-first century. For this to happen we need goals for where we want to be in education and mileposts to indicate our progress in getting there. Where we *should* want to be, what we expect in the quality of our educational programs, has changed dramatically. Doing a bit better than last year is not good enough in a society where the terms "international" and "global" take on new, and very real, meanings daily.

SREB's Commission for Educational Quality has put forward twelve specific goals for education and "indicators of progress" toward reaching these goals. Certainly these twelve are not the only important goals. Priorities may differ from state to state. But if we are to instill public confidence and sustain the momentum for improving education, I believe that every state must set goals for education, measure progress in achieving them, report results to the public in clear terms, and make a strong case for the support necessary to be successful. That is SREB's aim in publishing and promoting *Goals for Education*.

CHALLENGE 2000

Winfred L. Godwin
President

Goals for Education

CHALLENGE 2000

Why is it important that states set educational goals? Nearly all SREB states are implementing new standards and programs to improve the quality of education. Since 1981 they have led the nation in doing so. Comprehensive improvement programs were approved in most SREB states while they were still being talked about in other parts of the country. The long-term results of these reforms will determine whether there is a better future with improved standards of living in SREB states.

But, few states appear to have set specific goals for results they expect these new educational standards and programs to produce. Educators and elected officials need to ask themselves and each other several questions:

- Have we shaped our educational reforms into a vision of what we expect to accomplish?
- Do we know with some certainty where we want our state's educational system to be by the year 2000?
- Do we have ways of knowing whether we are on track with our educational programs? Of knowing whether we are supporting them adequately?
- In short, does our state have specific educational goals and ways of knowing when we have successfully reached them or are making progress toward achieving them?

If state leaders ask these questions of themselves and others, and demand evidence to support answers, they may find that the answers are too often "no."

Why then are educational goals important? Simply put, **the citizens of any state are not likely to achieve more in education than they and their leaders expect and aim for.** Consider this. Between the mid-1970s and mid-1980s there was much emphasis on the importance of earning a high school diploma. But virtually no state had either reliable information about how many students were dropping out of school or a specific goal to increase the number and percentage of high school graduates. It is not surprising, therefore, that the percentage of young adults with a high school diploma changed by only one percent in 11 years. (Fortunately, that one percent was on the plus side as more black students completed high school.)

Significant improvements in education do not "just happen." They are planned, pursued, and evaluated. If the number of students graduating from high school increases appreciably or if there is a rise in the percentage of entering college students who are ready for college-level work, it will be because these matters are priorities.

Educational improvement in any state is a long-term proposition. Substantial and sustained public support is required. Setting and pursuing educational goals may be the best way to encourage and maintain this support. Attempting to rally support from the public with general claims that schools and colleges are working harder or doing better will not suffice. States without specific goals for the year 2000 may likely remember the 1980s "as the good old days in education." States with educational visions and goals specifically tied to these visions may remember the 1980s as the time they laid the groundwork for their continuing prosperity.

Educational goals should be concrete. They should be realistic, but present a challenge to reach beyond the present grasp. Goals should be measurable so that progress in meeting them can be checked. SREB states should seek to link their goals to national standards and benchmarks—especially for student learning and performance.

Goals will vary from state to state, but there will be many similarities. Goals should address the entire range of educational programs. Why? Because it is impossible to separate the question of the quality in a state's elementary and secondary schools and in its colleges. Goals should focus on student learning and on what it takes to produce satisfactory levels of student learning in schools and colleges.

Many SREB states face special problems in raising achievement and attainment to national levels. These states have disproportionate numbers of citizens from disadvantaged backgrounds, many of whom are blacks or Hispanics. Disparities in opportunities and outcomes are too prevalent in every state. Therefore, as states set goals for the education of the population in general, they should determine what these goals mean for minorities, create the special programs that may be needed, and track the degree of success for both majority and minority populations.

The need for higher levels of achievement for minorities is not simply a call for more basic skills instruction in the schools. The need to have more minorities participating in higher education is as great or even greater. Targets must be set for more minority students to attend college, to earn four-year degrees, and to pursue and earn graduate and first professional degrees. If we are to avoid drifting toward a two-tier society with one level well-educated, well off economically, and mostly white, and the other just the reverse, then minorities have to be represented in higher education to the same degree as they are in the schools.

THE YEAR 2000

We no longer view the year 2000 in some mystical fashion. The twenty-first century is just around the corner. We are much closer to the first day of the next century than to the day when the first step was taken on the moon. Dramatic changes are certain to occur in the remaining few years of this century. Who can forecast what research into artificial intelligence, superconductivity, and medical science will produce? But there are some relative certainties about the beginning of the twenty-first century.

By the year 2000 our nation's population will be "older." For the first time more than half of us will be over 35 years of age. Fewer of us will be under 25 years old. More will be over 65. As we move into the twenty-first century, this "aging of America" will have a profound effect on our social and governmental policies. More retirees will be relying on a relatively smaller work force. It may take more effort to gain support for public education because a smaller percentage of families will have school-age children.

By the year 2000 there will be more of us, but not a lot more. Half of the SREB states will grow as fast or faster than the nation—12 percent in 12 years—and half will grow at a slower rate.

By the year 2000 there will be more minority citizens in SREB states (blacks, Hispanics, and other minorities) and minority school children, but these increases will be dramatic in only a few states. If current trends prevail, minority students will continue to have lower levels of academic achievement, higher dropout rates, lower levels of literacy, and be less likely to enroll in college preparatory programs.

By the year 2000 there will be more youngsters in school in SREB states —about 10 percent more—but nearly half of this increase will be in three states (Florida, Texas, and Virginia). School enrollments in almost half of the SREB states may decline.

By the year 2000 there may be slightly fewer persons in college (5 percent or so fewer) if present trends continue. There will be one and a quarter million fewer traditional college-age young adults in the SREB states. Given present trends, black and Hispanic students will attend college at rates much less than what might be expected if enrollments matched the percentage of black and Hispanic young adults in the total population.

By the year 2000 SREB states may not have closed the gap between the region and the nation in the percentage of their citizens with college degrees. Compounding this troubling estimate is the continuing disparity in the rates at which black, Hispanic, and white students are earning college degrees.

By the year 2000 the labor force will contain more non-white citizens, more females, and more immigrants. Well over 50 percent of the increase in the labor force will be made up of black, Hispanic, and other minority group members—groups currently underprepared for the higher skilled jobs.

By the year 2000 ten million new jobs are likely to have been created in the SREB states. Over 80 percent of the ten million jobs may require a high school education and, more than ever before, jobs will require some postsecondary education. There will be a sharp decline in the share of jobs that can be filled with individuals who have less than a high school education. The pay for these jobs will be much less than for those requiring a high school diploma or some college. States are already encountering the real—not theoretical—problem of a job market that requires more education and a work force composed of groups who have not fared well in our educational systems. Simply put, it is not clear that our educational systems are on schedule to produce the persons needed for the jobs of the twenty-first century.

By the year 2000, goods-producing industries will experience almost no change in employment; service-producing industries will account for nearly all new growth. Our national economy, and thereby our state economies, will be increasingly interrelated with global economies. Manufacturing employment will decline nationally, and only increase slightly in the SREB states. A growing share of the jobs in manufacturing will be made up of managerial, engineering, and related jobs. In the SREB states, about 400,000 farm jobs will disappear.

SETTING GOALS FOR EDUCATION TO CHANGE THE FUTURE

Several trends are virtual certainties—the population will be older and more ethnically diverse, so will the labor force, and there will be higher educational requirements for jobs that will be increasingly in the service sector of the economy.

Other predictions are not certainties; they can be altered in the decade ahead. Our concern is with educational trends that, when projected to the year 2000, yield an unacceptable future. If current situations prevail in the year 2000, too few children will be ready for the first grade or will graduate from high school. Not enough minority students will complete high school and college, and too few citizens will have a college degree.

How can this unacceptable future be altered? By setting and reaching educational goals, states can change these trends and literally change their future.

EDUCATIONAL GOALS FOR SREB STATES

"If excellence means anything at all it is a universal concept, [we must] be measured against the same criteria of excellence which are applied everywhere." That bold claim was controversial when made by the Southern Regional Education Board nearly three decades ago. Many who heard it were skeptical. Most SREB states were behind the nation economically and educationally. Their leaders were encouraged that better times were ahead, but doing a bit better this year than last year seemed a more realistic goal than meeting national standards.

Today, there is wide agreement that SREB states should strive for national standards. And some, particularly governors, assert that international standards are more appropriate now that the marketplace is increasingly global.

If SREB states are indeed determined to meet or exceed national standards in education by the year 2000, what kinds of goals must they set and reach? And what actions or conditions—what "indicators" of progress—will signal to citizens, educators, and government leaders movement toward meeting long-range educational goals?

BY THE YEAR 2000—

All children will be ready for the first grade.

Indicators of progress toward having all first-graders ready to begin schooling include—

- Increasing the percentage of "at risk" children served by pre-school and kindergarten programs to 100 percent by the year 2000;
- Using readiness assessments for all children prior to their beginning the first grade and providing appropriate developmental programs to meet individual needs;
- Establishing programs that help those children who are unprepared to begin academic work in the first grade in 100 percent of the districts.

Today not all children are ready to begin the first grade. Too many never catch up. Unless additional steps are taken, possibly one-third of the approximately one million children projected to be entering the first grade will not be ready to do so in the year 2000. Several years ago South Carolina found that more than one-third of its entering first-graders were not prepared to begin academic work. Perhaps not coincidentally, more than one-third of all students dropped out before graduating from high school. Today three-fourths of South Carolina's entering first-graders are ready, and those who are not get additional special help.

Pre-school and kindergarten programs are a wise investment to develop mental, social, and physical skills, especially for children from disadvantaged homes. First, the needs of pre-school children should be determined using formal and informal assessments, such as teacher observations, tests, health appraisals, and checklists of students' readiness skills. Teachers must be prepared for these

pre-school programs, and more of them will be needed. Helping all children be ready for the first grade is not just a challenge for the educational system. The problems of "at risk" children and their parents are more than a school problem. Unless there is effective local coordination of health and social services linked to educational programs, all children will not be ready for the first grade in the year 2000.

BY THE YEAR 2000—

Student achievement for elementary and secondary students will be at national levels or higher.

Indicators of progress in raising student achievement to national levels, or higher, include—

- Establishing and publicizing specific student achievement goals by schools, districts, and states;
- Reporting of student achievement results by divisions such as quartiles—upper one-fourth, middle two-fourths, and lower one-fourth—to keep the focus on helping all students make progress;
- Reducing at the school, district, and state level the number of students whose achievement scores fall in the bottom one-fourth on national measures, and increasing the number of students who score in the higher categories;
- Raising steadily the percentages of students meeting academic standards set by schools, districts, and states at several grades throughout elementary and secondary schooling;
- Increasing the percentages of students meeting standards or making gains on national achievement tests (for example, raising to the national average or higher the percentage of students who read at the Adept level or write at the Adequate level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress);
- Narrowing by one-half the unacceptably large gaps in achievement of students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds (achievement should also be reported in ways that clearly show any existing disparities among students with different economic and geographic backgrounds so problems can be pinpointed);
- Increasing the percentage of high schools offering Advanced Placement courses for college credit to at least 60 percent and the percentage of students taking the Advanced Placement examinations to the national average or higher;
- Increasing the "passing" rate (score of 3 or above) on Advanced Placement examinations to the national average or higher.

It will be difficult for many states to achieve truly current national levels of student performance. Why is this so if nearly all states have student achievement scores that are already "at or above the national average" on many so-called

national tests? When the weaknesses of these tests are corrected or lessened—weaknesses that have led to results showing nearly all states at or above average—and the revised National Assessment of Educational Progress provides new state and national measures of student achievement, the national averages will be more accurate indicators of student achievement across the country.

In addition to these more challenging national standards, there is a special problem, not to be underestimated, in achieving the goal of national levels of student performance. Specifically, we should confront the fact that children from disadvantaged homes tend to have lower academic achievement and the numbers of these students are increasing. This fact, as well as continuing nationwide efforts to raise student achievement, means that many SREB states will face the difficult task of increasing achievement so more students will meet higher national standards. The challenge to the SREB states is similar to swimming upstream against a strong current—very difficult, but essential if we are to survive.

Texas, for example, is one of a very few states to set a goal for student achievement (national norms by the year 2000). By the year 2000, minority students will account for more than one-half of all elementary and secondary students in Texas. A disproportionate number of minority students will be from disadvantaged homes. Texas must take this fact into account, and deal with it, to raise student achievement to national norms. So must other states.

If student achievement goals are to be set and reached, then student achievement must be measured. More widespread use of technology will be needed—technology that offers new ways of measuring student achievement and provides almost instantaneous results to students and teachers to improve teaching and learning. No single existing indicator, test, or standard provides an adequate measure of student achievement. Information from nationally normed tests, the proposed state-by-state version of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the American College Test, the Scholastic Aptitude Test, and Advanced Placement tests can be used to describe how well students are doing compared to national results. State basic skills tests, end-of-course tests, and high school graduation tests can help raise student achievement by pinpointing problem areas.

Focusing on basic skills will not be enough. The key to SREB states reaching national achievement levels will be to help more students move to the mid and upper ranges of skill levels that show development of abilities in reasoning and problem-solving. For high school students this means that the courses they take are very important. Simply stated, students generally know much more about subjects they have studied. For example, when time is spent on subjects such as science in elementary school, their priority in the curriculum is evident. States can, and are, requiring students to take more courses to earn a high school diploma. The much more difficult task, however, is to see that students learn what is necessary from these courses.

If our society is to flourish, our young people must know how our nation's democracy works, and appreciate that they must be constructively involved.

To prosper in an increasingly competitive international economy, they will need to know much more than at present about other nations—their cultures, geography, and languages. As members of a labor force they must acquire attitudes that generate gains in productivity and quality.

Focusing on just the things that can be easily measured will not be enough. Most of life is not spent in school or in the workplace. Education should open our lives to the role and value of the arts to us as individuals and to our society. We should not underestimate how creativity can be encouraged and fostered by the arts. Our educational systems are not the only shapers of beliefs, attitudes, and values, but they play a major role. Goal setting in these areas is not easy; the issues are complex and the options many, but a state that values the quality of life on an equal plane with the productivity of its workers will seek to set goals here as well.

BY THE YEAR 2000—

The school dropout rate will be reduced by one-half.

Indicators of progress toward reducing the school dropout rate by one-half from current levels include—

- Establishing a system to collect and report state dropout data by race and gender and by schools and districts according to a common definition;
- Developing statewide and local plans for reducing dropouts—plans that spell out what schools and governmental agencies will do and that provide incentives for making substantial progress;
- Providing funding to develop programs that identify and help at-risk students, beginning in early grades and continuing through high school completion;
- Reducing the number of chronically absent students by 25 percent and raising the overall student attendance rate to 95 percent, or higher;
- Increasing the percentage of students who complete high school programs, especially the percentage receiving high school diplomas (for example, 85 percent or more of the entering ninth-graders);
- Comparing student performance of high school graduates to comparable groups at the national level to maintain the integrity of the high school diploma.

If we could wave a magic wand over this year's first-graders it would surely be one that would ensure all of them a good high school education and the opportunity for more education beyond high school. But we know it does not work that way. Present trends show that too many of our youngsters will become adults without having completed high school and having earned a diploma. They will be left behind unless states more vigorously attack the problems of school dropouts and adult literacy. Currently, over 40 percent of those who do not complete high school programs earn an equivalency certificate through the General Educational Development (GED) program. While the GED is not the preferred option for younger persons, it is an alternative for adults who have left

high school. (Studies suggest that students earning a GED do not do as well in employment or in higher education as high school graduates.)

If one-third of a school's students were absent for several days due to a flu outbreak, an emergency would likely be declared. The school would close until the epidemic subsided. Yet for year after year we have graduated senior high school classes in which one-third, and sometimes more, of the original class was missing. And all too often we have accepted this fact as business-as-usual. The good news is not that there has been a dramatic upsurge in the high school graduation rate, but that educational and governmental leaders seem determined not to accept the present situation any longer.

No educational problem is being discussed more, but still, few states have adequate information about dropouts. Assuming that the estimated figures on school dropouts are even partially correct, the current determination to reduce the problem is well-founded.

Ten SREB states have dropout rates above the national average. In six of these, more than one-third of entering ninth-graders apparently do not graduate; black students are more likely to drop out than white students—twice as likely as white students in some districts; only about one-half of the Hispanic students in this country graduate from high school; and in total numbers, more white students drop out of school each year than do either black or Hispanic students.

If schools could solve the dropout problem by themselves, they would have done so. The fact that they have not may say many things. It certainly says that the dropout problem is bigger than the schools, and far bigger than a special program set aside in one "corner" of the school. Schools are the most important group in reducing dropouts. But local and state leaders may have to insist on—and sometimes require—coordination of services with other governmental agencies that deal with children and families as well as other groups—business and industry, for example. For, if these groups are not part of the dropout reduction efforts, the efforts are likely to fail.

BY THE YEAR 2000—

90 percent of adults will have a high school diploma or equivalency.

Indicators of progress toward increasing the percentage of adults age 25 and over with a high school diploma or equivalency include—

- Increasing to 50 percent or higher the percentage of school dropouts who enroll in and complete the General Educational Development program—for black young adults, this will mean doubling the number who complete the program after enrolling;
- Using assessments results, such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress Literacy Assessment, with young adults to determine the skills and knowledge that are being gained (or not gained);
- Increasing dramatically the number of employees participating in business-sponsored "learn and earn" programs to complete a high school equivalency.

Even if states reduce the dropout rate by one-half, there will be over 10 million adults in the SREB region who have not completed high school in the year 2000.

While many young adults earn an equivalency certificate, few adults over the age of 40 seek to earn a GED. Therefore, states must concentrate most of their efforts on younger adults, more of whom must be motivated to earn a GED. For example, only two of ten black citizens who enroll in a GED program complete it. Business leaders, in small and large companies, may play a major role with incentives or requirements that employees "learn and earn." Workplace literacy partnerships sponsored by business, education, and government may hold the most promise for motivating young adults.

Measuring the attainment and achievement levels of adults at around the age of 25 can show how young adults in the region are faring compared to the nation. The 1986 National Assessment of Educational Progress Profile of Young Adults revealed that the country does have a literacy problem among young adults, not an "illiteracy" problem—"95 percent can read and understand the printed word, but in terms of tomorrow's need there is cause for concern: Only a small percentage can understand complex material."

BY THE YEAR 2000—

4 of every 5 students entering college will be ready to begin college-level work.

Indicators of progress in preparing more students to be ready for college-level work include—

- Establishing standards that include a core of required academic high school courses for admission into 4-year colleges and universities;
- Increasing the percentage of students taking algebra 1 by grade 10, at least to the percentage of graduates who enter postsecondary programs (with special emphasis on getting more minority students to complete algebra);
- Increasing the percentage of high school students enrolled in an academic or college preparatory high school track to equal or exceed the percentage of students going on to academic postsecondary programs;
- Establishing in every institution of higher education appropriate standards for beginning college-level study and assessments to determine if students are prepared to begin this degree-credit study;
- Establishing policies that require successful completion of non-credit remedial education courses for students not meeting degree-credit standards and continuous evaluations of the effectiveness of remedial education programs for students from different backgrounds and levels of preparation for college.

SREB states will continue to lag behind the nation in college enrollment and completion unless recent actions by schools and colleges are continued and new efforts are put into place. Raising high school graduation standards, special high

school diplomas for college-bound students, and admission standards that require a solid academic core of subjects are actions that have been taken by SREB states in the 1980s. End-of-course testing for high school courses and the use of college placement tests to provide high school students with information on meeting standards for college are promising, but are underway in only a few SREB states. While some colleges and universities are providing high schools with limited information on student performance during the freshman year, additional joint cooperation by schools and colleges is needed to develop more specific and useful information so that high schools can improve counseling and instruction. A noteworthy school-college effort is the SREB/Kenan project in which colleges and schools begin in the eighth grade to encourage black students to prepare for college. The project provides students with support and counseling to take, and succeed in, needed high school courses. Faculty in schools and colleges should work jointly to develop high school curricula that are meaningful and provide students with the necessary skills to enter a postsecondary academic or vocational program.

The definition by colleges and universities of what is meant by college-level work will ensure that access to higher education is to quality programs—necessary if higher education is to be a significant economic and social force. Remedial education in colleges and universities is now needed by about one-third of the students in states that have collegiate placement standards. If states are to increase the access to quality collegiate education, especially for minorities and adult citizens, colleges must offer some remedial education for years to come. But it is reasonable to expect that in future years the school improvement efforts and college actions will mean fewer first-time college students who will need remedial education. The remedial education programs that are provided by colleges should be more carefully evaluated than are most such programs today, or the support for them is likely to drop sharply.

BY THE YEAR 2000—

Significant gains will be achieved in the mathematics, sciences, and communications competencies of vocational education students.

Indicators of progress in improving basic competencies of students who complete secondary vocational education programs include—

- Raising the basic reading, mathematics, and science competencies of students who complete secondary vocational education programs to national averages or higher as measured by programs such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (for example, increase the percentage of students reading at the Adept or higher level on the National Assessment or demonstrating the mathematics skills to solve moderately complex procedures);

- Establishing more precise, demanding, and measurable basic competency, placement, and technical objectives for vocational students;

- Establishing targets for the percentage of students who complete vocational programs and are successfully placed in related jobs, the military, or pursue further education (for example, a state target of 80 percent or more may be a desirable goal);
- Increasing to the national average (now 50 percent) the percentage of students who complete three or more units of vocational education programs and continue their education within one year after high school graduation;
- Doubling the percentage of vocational education students who take one or more college preparatory mathematics courses, one or more college preparatory science courses, or courses specially designed to teach similar content through an applied process;
- Evaluating and revising the ways that vocational education teachers are prepared, licensed, and updated, with the emphasis on improving their academic competencies and their skills for teaching applied courses.

Basic academic competencies in communication, computation, and applied sciences are fundamental to preparing young people for further learning, as well as for immediate employment upon high school graduation. Vocational education programs that place a high priority on developing basic academic skills can help produce high school graduates with the necessary skills for further learning—on the job or in formal education. There are too few of these programs today. Students in vocational education programs are more likely to have below average scores on basic competency measures than are students in the general or college preparatory curriculum. Vocational education students take on average only three fewer academic courses than do other high school students. However, the academic courses they do take are likely to be in the general curriculum, not in the college preparatory curriculum, and provide no in-depth study of any subjects.

Steps are being taken to raise the basic competencies of vocational education students by increasing the percentage who take higher level mathematics and science courses. Thirteen states in an SREB consortium are testing at more than 30 pilot sites new vocational programs that make high level communication, mathematics, and science instruction an important part of vocational studies. The SREB-Vocational Education pilot sites will: prescribe for each student a specific program of study that includes higher level mathematics and science courses; develop new ways to teach higher level academic skills through applied courses, provide staff development for teachers; and increase the amount of time vocational teachers devote to teaching basic competencies. These new programs will strengthen the ties between academic and vocational instruction to expand students' opportunities for employment and postsecondary education.

Similarly, additional efforts are needed to assure that vocational teachers spend more time teaching related basic competencies in an occupational context. Students in vocational classes spend 60 percent of their time using basic skills—

reading, speaking, listening, writing, and mathematics. However, today vocational teachers on average spend only about three percent of their time explicitly teaching basic competencies. More emphasis on teaching basic competencies in vocational instruction and external assessments of competency can help states ensure that vocational education students meet business- and industry-established occupational and basic competency standards.

Nationally, about 50 percent of the high school students who take at least three units of vocational education continue their education within one year after high school graduation. In no SREB state do vocational students continue their education at this rate. More vocational students will need further study after high school if states are to have citizens who can compete for and succeed in the jobs of the twenty-first century.

BY THE YEAR 2000—

The percentage of adults who have attended college or earned two-year, four-year, and graduate degrees will be at the national averages or higher.

Indicators of progress to increase levels of collegiate education in the SREB region include—

- Narrowing steadily the gaps among citizens of different races in their college attendance and graduation rates (for example, increasing the college attendance rates for black and Hispanic students by 30 percent may be a state goal);
- Increasing to national averages or higher the rates at which new high school graduates and adults enroll in higher education (for example, increasing the overall college participation rate by 20 percent by the year 2000 may be a goal for many states);
- Increasing to the national averages or higher the percentage of students who each year earn two-year, four-year, and graduate degrees (for example, many states will need a 20 percent increase by the beginning of the next century);
- Increasing the completion rate in two-year associate degree programs above the current average of 20 percent for students entering these programs;
- Increasing the percentage of two-year college students who go on to attend senior institutions, currently about 20 percent, (states will need effective transfer agreements between two-year and four-year institutions and programs to raise the numbers of minority students who transfer to senior institutions);
- Setting quantitative and qualitative targets for graduate enrollments, with consideration of the proportion of minorities and women enrolled, and creating conditions for growth in selected fields.

Citizens of SREB states should have the same level of collegiate education as U.S. citizens generally. Until this is achieved, a state is likely to have great difficulty

competing successfully in national and international markets. Also, it is unlikely that its citizens can enjoy the same level of cultural and social benefits that accrue in those states having high percentages of college-educated citizens.

In 1950 only one of sixteen citizens in the SREB region had earned a college degree, and only one of seven had attended college at all. Today one of seven of all adults over the age of 25 has a baccalaureate degree or higher, and nearly one of three has attended college.

Dramatic progress? Yes. So dramatic one might forget that making a college education available to all who can benefit from it is still a relatively new, almost uniquely American idea. Just how new an idea is shown by the fact that in many SREB states more than half of this year's graduates are the first members of their families to earn a college degree.

By all valid measures, the SREB region continues to trail the nation in the levels of collegiate education for all of its citizens—including white, black, and Hispanic. Furthermore, based on current population and college enrollment patterns, the collegiate education gap between the SREB region and the nation may be just as large by the year 2000. The challenge, therefore, is for states to have a greater share of their citizens prepared for college, enrolled in college, and graduated.

BY THE YEAR 2000—

The quality and effectiveness of all colleges and universities will be regularly assessed, with particular emphasis on the performance of undergraduate students.

Indicators of progress and targets for assessing quality and effectiveness can be developed by each state to reflect its own needs and aspirations, but each state should consider—

- Establishing standards for students to successfully complete remedial/developmental courses; all institutions will adopt these standards or more rigorous ones;
- Requiring institutional goals and standards for the proportion of students successfully passing state and national examinations for licensure or certification;
- Insisting that each institution evaluate the effectiveness of its core curriculum in providing a sound general education for students during the first two years of college;
- Insisting that every institution or system of institutions establish graduation and retention goals—with special attention to minority and disadvantaged students;
- Establishing indicators and achievement targets for graduate programs and state investments in research and development efforts.

Improving access alone is not enough; the access must be to quality educational programs. Our nation's views about quality will undoubtedly change between now and the year 2000, reflecting the increased knowledge demands of the twenty-first century and the continuing use of international standards to measure where we are.

Each state should spell out the kinds of assessment systems it requires. These assessment systems should take into account the diversity and differences in mission and scope represented in a state's colleges. At the same time the state has a responsibility, indeed an obligation, to assert certain minimum expectations for all colleges and universities, on the one hand, and, on the other, to provide ways to identify and reward superlative performance.

Assessment systems should place heavy, but not exclusive, emphasis on student learning and performance outcomes. SREB has consistentiy supported this emphasis and the national organization of State Higher Education Executive Officers has endorsed a general program for assessing institutional effectiveness.

Among the sure bets for the year 2000, and beyond, is the need to generate new ideas in science and technology and to convert knowledge to new products and services. To do that, graduate programs, particularly those in the sciences, engineering, and mathematics, must be strong. The need for improvement in the pre-school and K-12 programs and undergraduate education notwithstanding, we cannot leave out of the equation the need for higher quality at the graduate level.

State systems for assessing institutional effectiveness should make the goals of the institutions widely known and report to the public the progress made in achieving these goals.

BY THE YEAR 2000—

All institutions that prepare teachers will have effective teacher education programs that place primary emphasis on the knowledge and performance of graduates.

Indicators of progress toward effective teacher education programs that emphasize knowledge and performance of graduates include—

- Adopting as state policy a continuing state-level emphasis on improving teacher preparation programs that includes college and university presidents and the arts and sciences and education faculty of all colleges and universities in periodic examination of teacher preparation programs;
- Instituting teacher licensure and program approval standards based primarily on knowledge and performance of graduates;
- Evaluating different approaches to prepare teachers, such as alternative certification, four-year undergraduate, and extended programs, based primarily on performance of graduates and of their students;

- Reducing by one-half the percentage of graduates not meeting initial teacher licensure standards;
- Increasing threefold the number of minorities graduating from programs to prepare teachers—this means an annual increase of approximately 20 percent each year to the year 2000;
- Improving the performance of beginning and veteran teachers according to assessments of principals and veteran teachers;
- Maintaining or exceeding the national average in the proportion of teachers qualifying for certification compared to the number who apply when national board certification is established.

Teachers should be able to help all students learn, and they should be accountable for results. Colleges and universities are more important in helping teachers be successful than is evident from the current level of top administrative and faculty interest in programs to prepare teachers on most campuses. As schools focus more on student learning, school accountability, and school-site management, with more decision making by teachers, principals, and parents, colleges and universities should likewise rethink their roles. College and university programs to prepare teachers should provide solid grounding in liberal arts, depth of study in a discipline, and a central core of education courses based on the best research. With these tools teachers can make better decisions about teaching and instruction. Experiences in the schools for prospective teachers should be joint school-college efforts with funding provided accordingly. States will see more school-college projects—and more effective ones—if collegiate funding is not based overwhelmingly on enrollment and if colleges are more flexible about faculty pay and promotion policies to reward cooperative efforts with schools.

More minority teachers are needed, but there is not enough evidence that states are seeking to reverse the declining number of minority teachers at a time when minority students are increasing. The trends show clearly that incentives for prospective teachers and institutions will be required if there is to be any significant increase in the numbers of minority teacher education graduates. Similarly, too few teachers are prepared to help "at risk" students learn or to teach in urban settings. Attracting and preparing persons to teach, especially in areas such as science, mathematics, and special education, continues to be a concern. Many SREB states are recruiting large numbers of teachers from other states (Florida, for example, reports about 45 to 50 percent of newly hired teachers come from out of state).

State mandates alone are not sufficient to prompt campus faculty and administrators to make substantive curricular changes. Successful change in what and how future teachers are taught requires involvement by an institution's top-level faculty and administrative leaders. Change will take time, and it will involve conflict. North Carolina and Virginia are in the midst of state-mandated changes to require an undergraduate liberal arts major for all teachers within four-year

programs. Texas and Tennessee have similar initiatives. Creative academic leaders are using the process as an opportunity to rethink programs and involve collegiate arts and sciences and education faculty along with teachers and administrators from schools. Because policy decisions go beyond campuses and affect quality, cost, effectiveness, and supply of teachers, statewide efforts should provide general direction but call for campuses to develop the changes.

BY THE YEAR 2000—

All states and localities will have schools with improved performance and productivity demonstrated by results.

Indicators of progress toward improved performance and productivity of schools include—

- Establishing school standards and rewards based primarily on school outcomes, such as student achievement, attendance, and assessments of students' readiness for postsecondary education and employment;
- Focusing on school-site results and rewarding schools for outcomes;
- Preparing school board members, superintendents, principals, and teachers to establish goals and operate results-oriented accountability systems;
- Supporting programs in all districts that help principals and teachers increase the involvement of parents and the community in each school;
- Increasing by 100 percent school-business partnerships.

State school board, local school board, and individual school goals are often not clearly linked with well-defined roles for each. By using performance and productivity as major criteria in establishing goals and measuring progress, states, districts, and schools can become more effective. State and local accountability systems that focus on results allow flexibility in the ways for districts and schools to produce these results.

The school is the site for improving education. Successful school-based management will require information on student, teacher, and school performance to ensure that goals are met. Local school-based councils jointly involving teachers, principals, parents, business and community leaders will be needed. Training will be required for all—superintendents, principals, school boards, and teachers—to develop goals, focus on results, and implement new programs. High-performing schools might be encouraged by less regulation at state and local levels. Increasing the use of school-site management that focuses on outcomes allows more school-level decision making.

School principals often are not selected for their instructional leadership skills or prepared to help lead instructional change and provide the momentum and atmosphere for growth among teachers and students. This is not necessarily their fault. For years states have certified persons to be principals if they

merely accumulated a series of college courses. The courses did not have to be linked to the knowledge and skills associated with effective school principals. This whole process is beginning to change in many states as certification, selection, evaluation, and rewards for principals now focus more on performance.

Strong school/community ties are vital. Increasingly, metropolitan and suburban area teachers and principals often are not a part of a traditional "school community." This situation requires special efforts on their parts to build community support. Teachers and principals now face much different parental situations—large numbers of families are headed by only one parent or both parents are employed full-time. It is more difficult now, and more important than ever, to involve many of these parents in the schooling of their children. Simple public relations schemes or twice a year back-to-school nights are not sufficient. Demonstrating that the community's well-being is in fact linked to education can serve to stimulate more business/school efforts.

BY THE YEAR 2000—

Salaries for teachers and faculty will be competitive in the marketplace, will reach important benchmarks, and will be linked to performance measures and standards.

Indicators of progress toward competitive teacher and faculty salaries include—

- Agreeing at the state level on appropriate salary goals for teachers and faculty and on a schedule for meeting these goals;
- Providing pay plans for teachers and faculty that reward outstanding performance, expanded responsibilities, or expertise in critical areas (for example, allocation of a set percentage of salary funds to be awarded for performance, expanded responsibilities, or to persons in critical shortage fields);
- Establishing a system to inform the governor, legislators, and citizens about the present and projected supply and demand for teachers and faculty and the progress made in achieving compensation goals for them;
- Conducting periodic reviews of the areas of expertise, gender, and race of persons who are attracted to teacher education programs, who graduate, and who are employed as beginning teachers (such reviews should help guide policies about adequate compensation);
- Increasing numbers of teachers and faculty with higher performance evaluations who choose to remain in the classroom.

Since 1981 more than half of the 15 SREB states have increased teachers' salaries at the national rate. Never before in this century has that happened.

Increased salaries make a highly visible and symbolic statement about the intent and determination of states to improve educational quality. But increasing salaries for teachers and faculty is a "big ticket" budget item for states and local-

ities. For example, a 5 percent pay raise for teachers and faculty in Florida requires nearly $200 million. For the entire SREB region, a 5 percent raise requires more than one and a quarter billion new dollars. And a 5 percent raise marks no great gain in a given state as compared to salaries in the private sector or to those for teachers and faculty in other states. In many states significant annual pay raises for several years may be needed to reach an adequate level of compensation.

Most states need more systematic ways of setting benchmarks for adequate compensation for teachers and faculty. States may arrive at different definitions of adequate compensation. For faculty, states may decide that salaries must be competitive with those for faculty at similar institutions in other states or with regional or national benchmarks.

For teachers, states may determine that compensation must be competitive with selected occupations or with compensation of teachers in nearby states or in the nation at large. Salaries for teaching positions in shortage areas may have to reflect the market realities and be higher to attract persons to these positions. State and district school leaders should be sure that hiring and licensure practices promote, not hinder, an open market. In developing benchmarks, leaders should face squarely two questions:

- Are sufficient numbers of college graduates with average or above grades and appropriate credentials being attracted to teaching?
- Are most of the teachers who are identified as the most effective in evaluations remaining in the classroom for more than a few years?

When answers to both questions are "yes," then states can claim that compensation and working conditions for teachers are adequate.

There is substantial evidence that public leaders see increased salaries as a two-way street, and one side of the street is performance and accountability. For teachers' salaries this is particularly evident. In general, the SREB states that have raised teachers' salaries the most in the 1980s have linked higher pay to increased standards and performance. Career ladder and other pay-for-performance programs are one of the most obvious links, but there are also new standards for certification, higher standards to enter teacher preparation programs, internship and beginning teacher programs, more and better classroom evaluations, and more frequent and rigorous re-certification.

Collegiate faculty are generally assumed to be in a situation where merit evaluations and peer judgment play a major role in determining promotions and salary increases. Faculty in SREB states have not been subject to the same call from public leaders for increased accountability, and since 1981, in 12 of 15 SREB states their pay increases—at least the percentage of increases—have been lower than those for teachers.

BY THE YEAR 2000—

States will maintain or increase the proportion of state tax dollars for schools and colleges while emphasizing funding aimed at raising quality and productivity.

Indicators of progress toward maintaining or increasing the proportion of state funding for schools and colleges while emphasizing funding aimed at raising quality and productivity include—

- Agreeing at the state level on funding plans for schools and colleges that emphasize raising quality and productivity (for example, state, campus, and district leaders could earmark a specified budget percentage for special incentive awards for quality improvement);
- Providing annual financial statements to governors, legislators, and citizens on the state's success in implementing funding plans for education (statements should include "constant dollar" and percentage measures that communicate clearly);
- Evaluating the effectiveness of selected school and collegiate programs and linking the results to funding decisions;
- Establishing a state competitive grant process that assigns dollars where they will have the biggest impact on promoting specific initiatives (for example, university basic and applied research, effective school remediation programs, and dropout prevention programs).

SREB states unquestionably led the educational reform movement that began in the early 1980s. New programs, higher standards, and proposals to improve existing programs were the norm in most SREB states by 1984. Not all, but most of these programs cost more money. No state passed a comprehensive educational improvement act without approving a companion funding bill to begin the new plan. In the 1980s schools' budgets have generally fared better than those for colleges. For example, the percentage and absolute increases in teachers' salaries in most SREB states have been greater than those for collegiate faculty.

States with new educational improvement programs increased the share of state and local dollars going to education. Some states did this by raising taxes, others by earmarking for education a larger share of tax dollars from economic growth. In many states more than 100 million new dollars were designated for education in the first year of the new programs, with much of this going for higher salaries. But the litmus test for education's priority standing occurs in the state budget process every time the legislature meets.

In the SREB region a change of only one percent in how state tax dollars are spent means a shift of $750 million. State budgets are a bit like aircraft carriers. They are not given to sudden changes in direction, but they can, and do, change. Higher education, for example, receives a smaller share of the budgets in 12 of the 15 SREB states than it did earlier in the 1980s. If higher education in each of

the SREB states were at its highest 1980s priority level, $600 million more would be appropriated annually—enough to move faculty salaries in the region to the national average or higher. For an individual state, the real test of the resolve of its leaders comes in making the dollars available to bolster education. In Georgia, for example, the year after passage of the Quality Basic Education Act, the governor recommended that nearly two of every three new state tax dollars go to education. Mississippi took similar action in 1988 to dramatically raise the state's support of its schools and universities.

Two very basic facts are important for SREB states to keep in mind in judging their commitment to improving education. First, many new educational improvement efforts are underway and almost all are additions to existing state efforts. Second, SREB states have trailed the nation in several measures of financial investment in education. Therefore, it is difficult to imagine that in the next several years an SREB state committed to educational improvement could spend a smaller share of its budget for education. Simply stated, given the economic realities, it is unlikely that states can spend proportionately less to do more in education.

But it is also unlikely that state officials will continue to support exceptional funding increases for schools and colleges unless this funding is linked to raising quality and productivity. Funding trends in higher education already show this. New dollars for higher education in the 1980s, other than those for faculty salary increases which have been relatively modest in most SREB states, are going for specific purposes—primarily for centers of excellence, endowed chairs, targeted research, and instructional equipment. A similar trend is emerging for the schools. Teacher salary increases have accounted for much of their new funding, with most other new dollars earmarked for teacher and school incentives, dropout prevention, and other specific efforts.

The success of our nation's educational system is like that of the nation's economy—they both depend upon public confidence. When the public's confidence in the economy is high, consumer purchases and business investment plans reflect this confidence. When the public's confidence in its educational system is strong, this confidence should be shown in financial support for education.

CHALLENGING THE FUTURE

Will we challenge the future? Will we challenge trends for the year 2000 that forecast shortfalls in educational attainment and quality of education and therefore unacceptable standards of living? Will we set goals for education, work to achieve them, and alter the future?

Southern Regional Education Board states have shown an unusual willingness to try new ideas to improve education. They have demonstrated the capability of making new investments in education—investments intended to achieve results. Since 1981 there have been many results that reflect substantial gains in education. Yet, to be consistently successful in national and international arenas, much remains to be done. In meeting this challenge, past trends and future demographics are working against many states. This has not deterred SREB states in the 1980s. In fact, it may have increased the resolve of state leaders to do more to improve education and to do it more quickly. And they have succeeded.

The twelve recommended goals in this document are intended to add to that resolve. They are intended to encourage an even deeper and more sustained commitment to educational improvement from pre-school through graduate school.

Goals for Education

CHALLENGE 2000